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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 01081 101700Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 EUR-01 SMS-01 RP-10 SR-04 PM-05

NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 H-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAF-00

DODE-00 HA-05 SPH-01 /072 W

-----014799 101730Z /64

R 070618Z FEB 80

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6799

INFO USMISSION USUN GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

CONFIDENTIAL ISLAMABAD 1081

E.O. 12065: RDS-4 2/7/00 (KING, B) OR-M

TAGS: SREF PK

SUBJECT: SOVIET AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS ON AFGHAN REFUGEES

1. (C) ENTIRE TEXT.

2. UNHCR REP KOHAUT (PROTECT) TOLD DCH LAST NIGHT THAT HE HAD HAD SEVERAL CALLS FROM SOVIET AMBASSADOR AZIMOV IN ISLAMABAD REQUESTING A MEETING. KOHAUT CALLED AT SOVIET EMBASSY MORNING OF FEB 6 FOR WHAT KOHAUT DESCRIBED AS A "VERY STRANGE MEETING" THAT LASTED TWO AND A HALF HOURS. IT TOOK THIS LONG FOR SOVIET AMBASSADOR TO GET ACROSS HIS POINT WHICH, HOWEVER, BY END OF MEETING WAS QUITE CLEAR. AFGHAN GOVERNMENT BEARS NO ILL WILL TOWARD REFUGEES WHO SHOULD RETURN TO AFGHANISTAN IMMEDIATELY. THEY WILL NOT BE IN DANGER AND WILL BE WELL TAKEN CARE OF. HOWEVER, REFUGEES SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT AT SOME POINT AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO REASSESS ITS POSITION. IF REFUGEES DO NOT RETURN SOON, THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN AND PAKISTAN WILL FIND ITSELF SADDLED WITH A REFUGEE POPULATION FOR MANY YEARS TO COME AND A SITUATION ANALOGOUS TO PALESTINIAN REFUGEE PROBLEM WILL BE CREATED.

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 01081 101700Z

3. COMMENT: SOVIETS HAVE BEEN TAKING SOMEWHAT SIMILAR

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LINE WITH LOWER RANKING UNHCR REPS BUT THIS IS THE FIRST
HIGH LEVEL APPROACH. SOVIET MOVE STRIKES US AS A SHREWD
ONE BUT WE SEE LITTLE PROSPECT THAT REFUGEES WILL BE
RECEPTIVE TO THIS LINE.
HUMMEL

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